

OIE Code Chapters on Equine Diseases
(Equine Piroplasmosis, Equine Rhinopneumonitis, Equine Infectious Anemia, Equine Viral Arteritis, Equine Influenza, and Glanders)

Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission Report – October 2006

Equine Piroplasmosis, Equine Rhinopneumonitis, Equine Infectious Anemia, Equine Viral Arteritis, and Glanders: The United States supports the adoption of the proposed changes to these four equine disease chapters. We find these changes to be reasonable, effective, and scientifically sound.

Equine Influenza (Chapter 2.5.5)

General Comment: The United States has reviewed the proposed changes made to the chapter on Equine Influenza and notes that the present draft is a modification of the text that was recommended by the Ad hoc Group on Equine Influenza last March 2006.

The existing Code chapter specifically applies only to the equine influenza free countries. However, as recommended, this proposed draft still sets the bar at the level of the equine influenza free countries, zones or compartments. The chapter is best suited to the free countries as its aim is to eliminate, in so far as possible, the international spread of equine influenza..

The main discrepancy with these recommendations is that there are very few equine influenza free countries. Most of the international traffic in horses is done between countries that are not free. Thus, with regard to Articles 2.5.5.6 and 2.5.5.7, the effect will be to mandate the 21 day pre-export isolation regardless of the existence of equine influenza between the trading countries. For horses being shipped for immediate slaughter or for temporary performance-related travel to known equine influenza affected countries, the 21-day pre-export quarantine requirement makes little economic sense and scientific sense. There is a risk that this chapter will be widely ignored by importing countries which are themselves affected by equine influenza.

The United States, therefore, recommends that the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission propose one or two additional Articles for this Code Chapter that are both scientifically sound and logistically feasible and that incorporate some basic requirements for trading in horses between countries known to be affected by equine influenza.